

Diversity Council Minutes – Wed. March 16, 2005

Presiding:

Gordon Flake, committee chair

Members Present:

Kathy Ahlmark, William Boyd, Alyce Bradbury, Gordon Flake, Rodrigo Franco, David Goulding, Mike Humble (new), Ginny Ivanoff (OEEO, non-voting), Harriet Kinyamu, Alicia Moore, Bill Quattlebaum, Boris Risek, and Linda Yu

Members Absent:

Janice Allen (alternate), Cliff Baldwin, Sharon Bryant, Veronica Godfrey (BIG, non-voting), Ron Herbert (NIH catalyst, non-voting), Ethel Jackson, Bill Jirles, Charle League, Jackie Locklear, Lisa Rogers, Gerard Roman (OEEO, non-voting), Molly Vallant (non-voting)

Old Business

A. Minutes

The February 2, 2005 and February 9, 2005 minutes were reviewed and approved unanimously.

B. Reports

- 1. Black History month:** The February 16 seminar to be given by Dr. Genna McNeil of UNC, Chapel Hill had a great turnout (93). Alicia graciously filled in at the last moment as introducer, and sent a thank you to Dr. McNeil from the Council afterwards.
- 2. Spirit Lecture:** This is in the final stages. Dr. Shirley Malcom will give the lecture on March 31 from 1:00-2:00pm, which will be followed by a light reception. Dr. Marion Johnson-Thompson also plans to escort Dr. Malcom to an area school for a short lecture, and several students may attend her lecture at NIEHS.
- 3. Clerical/Admin/Secretarial/Technical (CAST) Committee:** Gordon will ask Lisa and Charle for an update by email.
- 4. Disability Subcommittee:** Clyde Hasty of the Health and Safety Branch presented the idea of a standing Disability Awareness Committee to deal with concerns as they come up. This issue came to his attention about a year ago during a presentation about safety and disabilities. NIH has a committee like this already established. Ideas generated by this discussion include:
 - This could be a proactive committee
 - The committee could initiate a state review of the grounds

- The committee could be comprised of anyone within the Institute with an interest; those with and without disabilities
- Ideally the committee would include three to five people with a sub committee for disability awareness month
- Work place accommodation for those disabled
- This could be a joint effort between OM and OD
- The committee could get involved in providing the NIEHS community with disability education; awareness is the biggest issue
- A survey could be started to find out the perceived need
- NIEHS needs a new scooter that has more flexibility; the committee could provide guidance

More information about the standing NIH committee is needed, and will be looked into. A vote was passed to establish the NIEHS Disability Awareness Committee. Clyde will be the Safety contact for the committee, and Ginny will be the EEO contact.

5. **Council Rotation:** A vote was held regarding the Council Rotation proposal and was unanimously approved. The judgment was made that there is no reason to amend the by-laws to do this. The new Council members will now join the Council on July 1st of each year. The present Council members in their 2nd year will rotate off in Jan. 2006, and the new Council members will rotate off in July 2006 in order to stagger the rotation. Future Council members will serve two year commitments.

New Business

1. **Asian Pacific Islander Subcommittee:** The members need to be identified and a planning meeting held.
2. **Committee Signup:** A list was passed for members to sign up for subcommittees.
3. **Privacy Needs:** It has come to the attention of a Council member (Dave) that there are NIEHS employees that have the need for privacy in order to fulfill their religious needs. In particular, a young Muslim woman in the lab is frequently interrupted during prayer times when her religion denotes that she not speak. It is proposed that the Council look into finding small, quiet spaces that may be available within the Institute to help fulfill privacy needs. These 'safe places' would be available to all NIEHS employees with a need for privacy (i.e., nursing mothers, employees that receive bad news while on the job, etc.). A proposal needs to be generated for Mr. Fried's approval once spaces that could be eligible are identified.
4. **Briefing Dr. Schwartz:** The EEO will be briefing Dr. Schwartz on April 16. Soon after this the Diversity Council should hold a briefing with Dr. Schwartz.

Adjourn:

Minutes taken and respectfully submitted by Kathy A. Ahlmark, 3/16/05.